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President: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 22

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/299 and Add.1 and 2)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.1)

The President: I call on the representative of France to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.1.

Mr. Dejammet (France) *(interpretation from French)*: Two years ago the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 50/3, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation".

I have the honour, on behalf of the francophone group in New York, to submit another draft resolution under this agenda item. This draft resolution demonstrates that the cooperation engaged in for two years under resolution 50/3 has been fruitful and has great potential for development.

May I add that the 41 sponsors of the draft resolution have been joined by Cape Verde, Poland, Seychelles and Tunisia.

The relationship begun in 1978, with the granting of observer status to the Agency, has flourished remarkably over the last two years. The pattern was set by several firm commitments, in particular a first cooperation agreement between the Agency and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1976. Then there was an agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in 1990. Participation by the Agency in United Nations activities, and vice versa, has made it possible to better ascertain and appreciate resources available to serve common interests and objectives. We welcome the opening of an office of the Agency in New York in May 1995, which has contributed a great deal to this harmonization.

Following the adoption of resolution 50/3, on 16 October 1995, a cooperation framework agreement was concluded with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on 26 October of that year, and in October 1996 an agreement was concluded with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), an agreement containing several development projects and programmes for implementation.

Since then the seal has been set on these agreements by the signing, on 25 June 1997, by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Agency of a cooperation agreement between the two organizations. On 8 September 1997 a similar agreement was signed between the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Agency.

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These agreements signal new, encouraging prospects. On the ground, joint actions taken by the Agency and UNICEF or UNDP make possible the creation of a synergy, of resources and personnel, in the service of development.

Action with UNICEF includes an education and literacy programme for girls and young women in rural areas in Benin, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mauritania and Viet Nam; a plan for basic education for displaced or poor families in Djibouti; a primary education programme in Viet Nam; and a technical assistance programme in Haiti to train teachers and principals and to provide teaching materials and resources.

The cooperation agreement with UNDP is intended, in particular, to strengthen the rule of law; to promote and protect human rights; to support the democratic process and good governance; to organize and strengthen national capacities; and to improve the economic development of the countries of the South, with, among other things, support for the establishment and management of small and medium-sized enterprises.

We must welcome this complementarity, through effective coordination, whose fruits are being seen on the ground, to the benefit of the people that need them. This enhances the visibility and credibility of the promoters of these projects.

The partnership between the United Nations and the Agency has taken on a new dimension with the signing on 25 June of the cooperation agreement by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Agency. The agreement expands cooperation to new fields, such as preventive diplomacy, the maintenance and consolidation of peace and, pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 50/3, all subjects of common interest in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields. The agreement also covers exchange of information and documentation.

Finally, we welcome the most recent agreement, concluded with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on 8 September, which puts the emphasis on joint actions to strengthen the rule of law, and protect human rights — particularly the rights of women and the rights of the child — and wage the campaign against racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. This agreement gives concrete expression to, and strengthens, cooperation which has existed for several years already, particularly through training seminars, where the expertise acquired by the Agency can be put to good use.

The types of cooperation developed between the Agency and the United Nations are not limited to these agreements. Dialogue and reciprocal representation, in particular, have a part to play.

Here I should like to stress the contribution made by the francophone group during the preparations for the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, on sustainable development, which made it possible to achieve consensus between countries with very different political, geographical, cultural and social circumstances, since that is the mission of francophonie. We hope that this positive and profitable experience can be repeated during the preparations for the ministerial conference on water to be held next spring in Paris.

May I also mention the expansion of this cooperation to electoral assistance to francophone countries, which led to a very productive meeting a few weeks ago.

However, we have not exhausted all the possibilities for partnership. New interests have recently emerged in the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the Department for Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. The prospects for cooperation have much to offer.

As I speak before the General Assembly, and on the eve of the Hanoi summit which will bring together many of the States represented in this Hall, it gives me great satisfaction to stress the contribution to the objectives pursued here made by bodies that represent French-speaking countries, in particular, their Agency which, I might add will adopt in Hanoi the title of Agency for the French-Speaking Community.

Undoubtedly, the success of this cooperation is partly due to the rationalization and synergy of the resources it is creating. This cooperation helps avoid any useless and costly duplication.

Also, such is the dynamism of multilateralism when it harnesses a network of solidarity to work for the same ideals and when it thus nurtures cooperation. The resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency has borne fruit and still contains an abundance of new projects.

We therefore hope that these promises will materialize in the next two years. For this reason, we thank all the Member States for supporting the draft

resolution so that a review of these new achievements can be included in the report that we call upon the Secretary-General to submit to us at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): The Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC), which was established on 20 March 1970 in Niamey in the Republic of the Niger, was born of an ideal — that of bringing together countries that use French as a common language in a joint endeavour, and seems to express a new solidarity and a further element in rapprochement between peoples through constant dialogue among civilizations.

Today, 27 years after the ACTC was established, it has a membership of 47 States and Governments. As a meeting point for dialogue between Africa, America, Asia and Europe, the primary mandate of this unique intergovernmental organization for French-speaking countries is to affirm and develop multilateral cooperation between its members in the fields of education and training, culture and communications, energy, the environment, agriculture, economic development, scientific information, and support for democracy and the rule of law.

The relationship between the Agency and the United Nations is not a new one. It already goes back a number of years. In 1978, the ACTC was granted observer status by the General Assembly, thus enabling it to take part as an observer in all the conferences and meetings held under the auspices of the United Nations.

Since then, the ACTC has participated in the regular sessions of the General Assembly and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies that deal with issues of particular interest to its activities. In addition, it has also taken part in several major conferences, namely the World Summit for Children, the Earth Summit, the World Summit for Social Development, the World Food Conference, and so on.

At the same time, while we, the French-speaking community are actively preparing for the forthcoming francophone summit in Hanoi, we welcome the fact that the relationship between the Agency and the organizations of the United Nations system continues to develop.

In the field of education and culture, the Agency and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are collaborating closely to implement programmes of interest to both organizations, such as basic education, teacher training, distance learning and so forth. The Agency signed a framework agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in 1990 which provides for the implementation of joint projects in the areas of energy, industrial technology, the establishment and management of small and medium-sized enterprises, feasibility studies, the promotion of investment, and so forth.

The Agency has also concluded cooperation agreements with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) in areas where they have specific interests in common.

In short, cooperation between the ACTC and the United Nations has developed considerably, particularly in the last two years since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/3. We very much hope that this cooperation will be strengthened even further, in the interest of both organizations and of peace and international cooperation. For its part, the Lao People's Democratic Republic will spare no effort to promote this fruitful cooperation.

Mr. Boisson (Monaco) (*interpretation from French*): The Principality of Monaco, as a member of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation since it was set up in 1970 in Niamey, particularly welcomes the development and strengthening of cooperation between this institution which brings together States and Governments that use French as a common language, and the United Nations, which has from the outset accorded the French language its due status as a language of diplomacy. As one of the two working languages of the United Nations Secretariat and one of the six official languages of its bodies, the French language, which is also the language of the Agency, has paved the way for the establishment and subsequent development of cooperation between these two intergovernmental organizations.

In 1978, in its resolution 33/18, the United Nations General Assembly had already taken account of this special feature and the potential it offered by inviting the Agency to participate in its sessions and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies as an observer.

In this capacity, the Agency has been able to be associated with and contribute to the major world

conferences convened by the United Nations, such as the World Summit for Children in 1990, the Earth Summit in 1992, the World Conference on Human Rights and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993, the World Conference on Population and Development in 1995, the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, HABITAT II, in 1996 and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly in June this year.

In each case, preparatory meetings and working groups enabled the francophone world to speak with one voice on a series of questions, which facilitated our search for compromise on texts that were often essential, because of their nature and their scope.

This cooperation is fully in keeping with the constitutional mandate of both organizations: the promotion of peace, international security, democracy and economic and social development.

The Agency's objectives, defined in article I of its Charter, revised and adopted in Marrakesh last December, include assisting in the establishment and development of democracy; the prevention of conflicts; support for the state of law and human rights; enhancement of the dialogue between cultures and civilizations; bringing peoples together through enhancing their knowledge of each other; and, finally, strengthening the solidarity of its members through multilateral cooperation in order to promote their economic expansion.

The cooperation agreement, officially signed on 25 June 1997 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, and the Secretary-General of the Agency, Mr. Jean-Louis Roy, has, by making it official, confirmed the determination of the two institutions to work together.

The Agreement has already led to consultations — in Paris last June, and in Libreville last July — between the two organizations on the crises in certain African countries, primarily in the Great Lakes region. With regard to electoral assistance, the Agency has developed a well-known expertise, based both on its own experience and on that of the non-governmental organizations with which it has worked for many years with confidence and effectiveness. It has also provided regular assistance, along with the United Nations and regional organizations, to the States that request it.

Along the same lines, and given their athletic and cultural nature, the francophone games — the third round of which has just been held in Madagascar — have been the occasion for young athletes and artists from 36 countries of the francophone community to come together in peaceful and friendly competition, designed to develop among them trust and solidarity beyond borders. The regular holding of these games, which are held in a different State each time, undoubtedly enhances mutual understanding among the participants and thus promotes peace and international understanding.

This cooperation also extends to activities of prime importance to my Government, namely, good governance, the promotion and protection of human rights and the establishment of the state of law, as well as support for the democratization process and the improvement of judiciary systems and interparliamentary cooperation.

The Agency and its International School play a considerable role in this respect through training and awareness programmes for political authorities, magistrates, policemen, teachers and students, in workshops, seminars and internships. Their actions, which support and are complementary to those of the United Nations, deserve more than ever to be emphasized and encouraged.

On 8 September last, a framework agreement for cooperation was drawn up between the Agency and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It will certainly lead to the further development of common initiatives in these key areas.

Harmonious and lasting economic and social development with respect for the dignity of humankind and its deepest aspirations is one of the basic objectives the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation shares with the United Nations.

The well-targeted and practical activities developed in this regard in the fields of new and renewable sources of energy, the transfer of technologies and the management of natural resources in order to protect the environment should also be increased in the future through strengthened cooperation between the two institutions.

The human dimension of development and of intergovernmental cooperation is broadly taken into account, and often in a very original way, by the Agency, which promotes initiatives to bring its partners

together on the basis of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

The Market for African Art and Entertainment, which the Agency launched in 1993, is an example of the determination of those involved in cooperation among francophone countries to see their projects not only in economic terms but also from the perspective of cultural and intellectual enrichment.

The draft intergovernmental convention on culture is another example, as well as a symbol, of this. The first truly standardizing measure to be taken by the States and Governments that are members of the Agency, it was carefully drawn up in accordance with the mandate delivered by the summit of Heads of State and Government in Cotonou in December 1995 and by the Conference of Ministers of French-speaking Countries in February 1996.

The text provides, in particular, for the commitment of signatory countries to provide financial and technical assistance for the creation and collective management of royalties and related rights, in order to facilitate the dissemination of works by authors, interpreters or performers, in keeping with the Rome Convention of 1961, as well as by any individual deemed to be such by the legislation of a signing State.

This matter naturally leads me to emphasize that cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency takes place at several levels and across the whole of the United Nations system, including specialized agencies as different as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

UNESCO and the francophone Agency work together very closely, for example, on implementing certain programmes of the International Fund for the Promotion of the Study of African Languages and Cultures, programmes which recognize the place and role of vernacular languages alongside a lingua franca, as a factor of development and identity.

On the basis of the cooperation agreement signed in 1976 between the two intergovernmental institutions, and strengthened in 1990 by an additional protocol creating a joint consultative commission, joint operational activities are regularly carried out by UNESCO and the Agency in the areas of basic education, education for adults, and after-school education — the very foundations of an economic and social development that truly takes into account the human dimension of progress.

For the Agency as well as for UNESCO, development is multidimensional; it cannot be reduced to economic growth alone. Economy, culture, education, science and technology are individual elements, certainly, but they are complementary and interdependent, and development per se, centred on men and women and their true needs, can be ensured only by focusing on all those elements together.

As we commemorate today the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and pay tribute to those who suffer from it, we cannot overlook the fact that development and progress cannot be reduced to the implementation of macroeconomic theories but must, as a priority, be directed, through concrete and tangible actions, towards the neediest and most deprived on every continent. That is the message transmitted to us by Father Joseph Wresinski, the founder of ADT Fourth World, which promoted this International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

That is the message that the principal figures in development assistance today have understood in undertaking to promote simple, practical and workable projects in tune with the daily demands of the communities with which they are concerned. That is the option that the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have unreservedly chosen.

The cooperation agreement that has bound them together since 1990 has facilitated the implementation of practical projects in the spheres of crafts, agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry and even the use of solar energy.

Nor have poor urban areas in both North and South been overlooked. The most vulnerable populations, living in critically precarious conditions, described by Father Wresinski as the "fourth world", and which can be found in every major city, are the focus of studies and seminars and of projects for training and social integration designed to improve their standards of living and environment. Linked to the creation of economic and commercial activities adapted to the various areas concerned, microeconomic and microfinance projects supported by the Agency and often carried out with the assistance of local bodies like Environmental

Development Action in the Third World (ENDA) have had beneficial, rapid and lasting results. We must therefore promote them by encouraging this timely interagency collaboration.

Respecting as they do human diversity and its contribution to man's progress and the natural solidarity that is based on a shared history, these programmes, we feel, are good reflections of the philosophy that underlies the cooperation between the United Nations system as a whole and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation.

I think I could find no better argument for urging the General Assembly, which is always eager to improve the lives of today's men and women — and particularly the neediest among them — on both the material and the intellectual levels, to adopt the draft resolution before us, which is devoted to such cooperation and of which the Principality of Monaco is a sponsor.

The adoption of this text will send a welcoming and encouraging message to the Agency's partners, who are also members of the United Nations and who will in the very near future be meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government in Hanoi, Viet Nam, to renew, *inter alia*, the framework of their cooperation and strengthen their institutions by electing, for the first time, a secretary-general of the francophone countries.

Mr. Tanasescu (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): It is my honour today to speak on behalf of a country whose francophone tradition goes back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. When it became a full member of the movement of countries that use French as a common language in 1991, Romania sought to ensure the continuity of its modern cultural tradition, which is deeply imbued with French spirit and values.

Today's discussion on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation is taking place at a specific juncture for cultural developments on the world scale. In the two years since we last discussed this subject, the process of the expansion of global communications and data networks has accelerated. That development has created both opportunities and challenges for the universal culture of the next millennium and for the prospects for cultural diversity, as well as for our cooperation as francophone countries. It is our common duty and responsibility to transmit over the information superhighway and airwaves the traditional and modern values that are strongly linked by the French language.

The Secretary-General's report on this agenda item (A/52/299 and Add.1) provides a detailed and comprehensive picture of the progress made in recent years in cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. I should like to indicate a few factors that we feel have made a decisive contribution to strengthening that cooperation.

First, there is the political support given by the Heads of State or Government of countries that use French as a common language to the work of the United Nations and their determination to enter into a new partnership with the various components of the United Nations system. This is an example that demonstrates that political will can bear fruit to the benefit of both organizations and their memberships.

Secondly, we have in mind the existence of areas of action and interest that are common to both organizations. The complementary nature of certain activities and programmes in which the Agency and the United Nations are engaged has led to the holding of periodic discussions between their secretariats to identify subjects, measures and procedures to facilitate their cooperation and coordination.

Thirdly, we believe that the creation of a legal framework for such cooperation, through the elaboration and conclusion of cooperation agreements between the Agency and several bodies within the United Nations system, has provided a guarantee of the continuity and long-term stability of their relationship. We believe that the agreement signed on 25 June 1997 by the Secretaries-General of the two organizations is essential to the strengthening of such cooperation. Pursuant to the provisions of the agreement, the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation may decide to act jointly in the implementation of projects that are of mutual interest, to set up committees or commissions to advise them on specific matters, and to exchange information and documentation.

We welcome the framework cooperation agreement signed between the Agency and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and are convinced that the 1998 fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be celebrated throughout the French-speaking countries. This is a moral duty we all owe to

Jean-Jacques Rousseau and to all the heroes who have died over the course of time defending his ideals.

The last factor that has contributed to the current level of cooperation between the two organizations is the ongoing and sustained work of the ACTC office in New York, for which we congratulate it most heartily. The continuing consultations begun by the office have facilitated the exchange of information and views between the French-speaking countries and have allowed several documents of interest to those countries to be drafted. The preparations for the General Assembly's special session on the mid-term review and appraisal of the overall implementation of Agenda 21, including the drafting of a document as our group's contribution to the session, was a defining moment for the office's activities.

In early September, Bucharest, the capital of my country, hosted the Third International Conference of the New or Restored Democracies on Democracy and Development, organized jointly by my Government and the United Nations Development Programme. The Conference's special topic was the relationship between democracy and development. High-level representatives of Governments, non-governmental organizations and academic and university circles from 77 countries — including several French-speaking countries — presented their experiences and thoughts on the topic and adopted a Conference document that is already available as an official document of the United Nations.

We wished to share this information for two reasons. The first was to thank the ACTC for its generous contribution to the process started by the Conference. The second was to suggest as one possible sphere of cooperation between us, both as French-speaking countries and as United Nations Members, the study of our experiences in the democratization process. The drafting of such a study, which could be submitted to the next Conference, to be hosted by an African country in the year 2000, would offer a new area for cooperation, not only between our countries, but also between the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation and the United Nations. Our permanent mission in New York, in cooperation with the ACTC office, could initiate consultations in that respect.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): The consideration of agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation", has given Tunisia the pleasant opportunity to speak on this subject.

The relationship between the Agency and the United Nations is quite exemplary and dates back to 1978, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 33/18, which gave that institution observer status, enabling it to take part in the work of the Organization and its subsidiary bodies. This has allowed the Agency to reaffirm its presence by taking part not only in the activities in New York, but also in major events in the life of the Organization and its principal agencies over the past six years. Whether at the World Summit for Children in New York in 1990, the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, or the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996, I would stress that the Agency has played an effective and important role in ensuring coordination and rapprochement between the positions of its states members. The Agency is indeed a unique organization, bringing together countries that, while dispersed throughout several continents, share a common language and the noble objectives that unite them despite their cultural and geographic diversity and their level of development.

United around a common ideal, the country members of the Agency see themselves as the expression of a new solidarity and an additional factor for bringing peoples closer together for ongoing dialogue among civilizations. The member countries of the Agency try to reflect this ideal of global solidarity through specific activities in such diverse areas as education, training, culture, communication, energy, environment, agriculture, economic development and scientific information, as well as in support for democracy and the state of law.

The ambitious civil and development project that underlies the Agency's activities cannot be carried out properly without increased international cooperation. That is why this institution established cooperation agreements with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1976, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in 1990, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1995 and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1996.

With UNESCO, in the area of education, the two organizations focus their activities on basic education and the production of teaching materials and manuals. With

UNIDO, cooperation is focused, *inter alia*, on creating and managing small- and medium-sized enterprises and promoting appropriate technologies for developing countries. UNICEF and the Agency have established, among other things, an education and literacy programme for young girls and women living in rural areas in countries. With UNDP, the framework agreement signed in 1996 led to cooperation in such varied fields as cooperation assistance among developing countries, education, culture, environment and energy.

The multifaceted cooperation developed by the Agency with the specialized agencies was crowned with success through the General Assembly's adoption in 1996 of resolution 50/3, which institutionalized cooperation between the Agency and the Organization. In accordance with that the resolution, the United Nations and the Agency have worked together on diverse subjects: the development of the situation in Central Africa and initiatives undertaken on all sides to achieve a settlement to the crisis in the region; electoral assistance to French-speaking countries; and sustainable development, including preparations for the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to the implementation of Agenda 21.

At the same time, the mutual representation of both organizations at meetings organized by each has increased. Thus, the United Nations Secretary-General took part in the work of the fifth summit of Heads of State and Government of French-speaking countries, held in Cotonou, Benin, in December 1995. The United Nations was also represented at the Conference of Ministers of French-speaking Countries working with the information highway and new information technologies, held at Montreal, Canada, in May 1997, as well as at the meeting of the Francophone Contact Group on the situation in the Great Lakes region, held in June 1997.

Today, the Agency and the French-speaking community are preparing together to enter a new phase, the outlines of which will be defined at the upcoming summit in Hanoi next November. At a time when the United Nations itself is preparing its own reforms in order to meet the imminent millennium with the best assets for success, it is essential to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the two institutions for the good of all parties. The cooperation agreement signed last June by our two Secretaries-General aims at that end. The draft resolution before the Assembly, which was submitted this morning by the Permanent Representative of France, confirms that happy convergence.

Tunisia is happy to reaffirm its support for cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. That cooperation highlights the identity of views and objectives of the two organizations and carries on and consolidates the activities of our Organization at the regional level, particularly in the area of development and development cooperation.

Mr. Ngo Quang Xuan (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak in support of the valuable ideas contained in the statement made by the Ambassador of France in introducing draft resolution A/52/L.1, designed to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC). Viet Nam highly appreciates the effective work done by the Agency, which is why it decided to become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation.

Over the last 27 years the ACTC has played an increasingly important role in economic and social development, which is making a great contribution to the common goals of the countries that have French as a common language. The ACTC is becoming a meeting point and focus of cooperation between Africa, America, Asia and Europe. It brings its members together within the great French-speaking family, thus creating an important community which participates in the global dialogue. It is also an intergovernmental instrument of a special kind which guarantees the success of cooperation between States and Governments of the francophone community.

The relationship between the Agency and the United Nations goes back a number of years. In 1978 the General Assembly adopted resolution 33/18, inviting the ACTC to participate as an observer in its sessions and in all conferences convened under its aegis of the Assembly, as well as in meetings of its subsidiary organs. Furthermore, a series of cooperation framework agreements in areas of common interest to the ACTC and the subsidiary organs of the United Nations established the relationship between the two parties. The adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 50/3 gave special impetus to that relationship and further strengthened cooperation between United Nations bodies and the ACTC.

Viet Nam is pleased to note that cooperation between the United Nations, its specialized agencies and

other United Nations bodies and programmes and the ACTC over the last two years has produced encouraging achievements in many areas. We are convinced that the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and the ACTC serves not only the purposes and principles of the United Nations, but also the current reform process of the United Nations.

Mr. Jele (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In particular, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the ACTC signed a cooperation agreement on 25 June 1997 to strengthen relations between the two intergovernmental organizations, an agreement marking a new stage in their cooperation. Viet Nam is convinced that it will establish a very solid basis for concrete action and the establishment of cooperation projects in the common interests of member countries.

Benefiting from close coordination between the conseil permanent de la Francophonie, the ACTC and other francophone countries, Viet Nam is preparing to host the seventh Francophone Summit in Hanoi in November. This will be the first time the French-speaking community has held its Summit in Asia, a turning point in the history of francophone solidarity. Viet Nam undertakes to do all it can to make the Summit a success and to welcome Heads of States and delegates coming from 49 member countries of the francophone community.

In conclusion, Viet Nam hopes that the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation will continue to enjoy the new spirit of cooperation created by resolution 50/3 in order to deepen and expand cooperation in areas of common interest. My delegation therefore hopes that draft resolution A/52/L.1 will receive the support of all Member States of the United Nations.

Mr. Lelong (Haiti) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Haiti is pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/52/L.1, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation". This is an important question, in which we have a great interest.

Allow me to recall that Haiti was present at the Niamey meeting when a group of 21 States and Governments with French as a common language concluded on 20 March 1970 the Convention establishing the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. Today, 27 years later, our Agency has grown to become the meeting point for 49 States and Governments from five continents.

Next November the seventh biennial conference of Heads of State and Government of the French-speaking countries will be held in Hanoi. The holding of this conference in Asia is a new symbol of the diverse membership of our community and of the fact that our ranks continue to grow with every summit.

This growth is proof of the Agency's strength and its capacity to accomplish its mandate, which is to support and to develop multilateral cooperation between its members in such areas as education and training, culture and communications, energy, the environment, agriculture, economic development, scientific information and supporting democracy and the rule of law.

The Agency makes its contribution to peace and development along with the United Nations and other organizations. It was in order to highlight the clear complementarity between United Nations and ACTC action for economic, political and social development that in 1978, at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly, the Agency was granted the status of observer, by resolution 33/18.

In line with the spirit of its Charter, the ACTC has established a broad and diverse network of relationships with the United Nations system. It has played an active role in all the conferences and summits organized by the United Nations. For a number of years now it has closely cooperated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in all its wealth of events and activities.

A framework agreement concluded with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) led to the establishment in 15 French-speaking countries of industrial development programmes designed to aid peoples and sustainable human development, with due regard for conservation of the environment. The ACTC also has cooperation agreements with UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in areas of interest to those two institutions. It has cooperated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for several years now, and recently — last September — the two institutions decided to give fresh impetus to their relationship by signing a new agreement.

It can be seen that the range of the ACTC's activities is broad, with many aspects. The scale of the new challenges facing the international community calls for increased coordination of development policies, and to this the cooperation between the United Nations and the ACTC continues to contribute effectively.

We are convinced that adoption of the draft resolution before the Assembly will strengthen this cooperation.

Mr. Reyn (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): Two years ago this Assembly adopted for the first time a resolution formally recognizing the cooperation between the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) and the United Nations. The resolution inaugurated a new partnership, which we welcomed. The ACTC then opened an office at the United Nations, thus making its presence more visible and making it possible to increase cooperation between the French-speaking countries at the United Nations.

The Agency, which is the organ of the French-speaking countries, and which is also called the Agency for the French-Speaking Community, now includes 44 States and Governments from four continents. This guarantees that within this centre of *francophonie* there is a diversity of cultures and views, which only further highlights the solidarity that emerges from the dialogue.

The primary mission of the ACTC is to promote this dialogue and to ensure cooperation in education, culture and communications, energy, the environment, agriculture, economic development, scientific information and the rule of law. As the United Nations mission is to deal with these problems at the global level, it is logical that there should be an exchange between the ACTC and the United Nations to take advantage of their complementarities.

This partnership is of long standing. The ACTC has enjoyed observer status at the United Nations since 1978, and certain bodies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) already had cooperation agreements with the ACTC. We are pleased that other bodies have expressed the desire for such agreements.

The ACTC does not have a political mission as such. However, the ideal of *francophonie*, as formulated in the preamble to the French-Speaking Community Charter, adopted in Marrakesh last December, is freedom and human rights; justice and solidarity; democracy, development and progress.

We believe that in the area of technical support, as well as in the organization of seminars bringing together French-speaking countries, the Agency's contribution can be very valuable and open up promising cooperation. The Agency's existing legal and judicial cooperation in the Great Lakes region is an example of this, and we encourage the Agency to pursue this work in close cooperation with the other actors in the field. We are particularly pleased by the activities undertaken in the field of human rights and by the cooperation agreement with the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Agreements have been concluded with the United Nations Children's Fund as well as the United Nations Development Programme. We welcome this, as well as the ongoing cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which, because of the two bodies' mutual focus on culture and their long collaboration, is one of the best examples of such cooperation.

Belgium is a sponsor of the draft resolution that France introduced on this item. We are pleased by the impetus that has been given over the last two years to the cooperation between the Organization and the Agency, these two bodies particularly by the signing last June of the cooperation agreement, which seeks to strengthen consultations on all matters of common interest in the political, economic, social, scientific and cultural fields.

We hope that this cooperation will continue to develop, thus making it possible to define areas of specific action where the ACTC can act in support of the United Nations, helping it to accomplish its often difficult tasks. This cooperation will contribute to promoting their common goal, which is to serve the international community.

Mr. Ka (Senegal) (*interpretation from French*): The item we are considering today, Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, is of prime importance to my delegation.

The establishment of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC), on 20 March 1970 in Niamey was a milestone in the realization of the plan to bring together the countries using French as a common

language in a joint project, thus contributing to the expression of solidarity by creating harmonious relations between peoples through a fruitful and ongoing dialogue between their cultures and civilizations.

President Léopold Sédar Senghor, one of the first proponents of this ideal, was also one of the first Heads of State to fight for the establishment of a French-speaking community in a framework of cooperation and solidarity, and open to all. According to President Senghor, that approach would promote the advent of a universal, pan-human civilization that would be nothing more than a meeting-place for giving and for receiving.

The ACTC was created against that backdrop to serve as a suitable framework for meetings, dialogue and convergence within the family of French-speaking countries. Its goal was to lead ultimately to the establishment of a structured community that would participate to varying degrees in various aspects of international activities. The Agency's mandate, therefore, is to promote and develop among its members a multidimensional cooperation in key areas such as education, economic development, environmental conservation, good governance, conflict prevention and the strengthening of the rule of law.

We need hardly stress that the objectives of the Agency are identical to those of the Charter of the United Nations. This is the context for the cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency, whose relationship must necessarily be reflected in the day-to-day life of both institutions.

In its resolution 50/3 of 16 October 1995, the General Assembly noted the complementarity of the activities of the Agency and those of the United Nations and of the programmes of its specialized agencies. As part of the implementation of that resolution, the two institutions set up mechanisms for cooperation — in place since 25 June last — under a cooperation agreement aimed at strengthening their relations on matters of common concern, particularly in the political, economic, scientific and cultural fields. I am convinced that this agreement will enable the ACTC and the United Nations to cooperate more closely in order better to respond to the aspirations of peoples and nations, for whom these two institutions were created.

I therefore call on Member States to support draft resolution A/52/L.1, of which Senegal is a sponsor, and also to support the joint efforts of the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation to consolidate, broaden and deepen their cooperation in the interests of peace and of international solidarity.

Mr. Wan Chat Kwong (Mauritius) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is very pleased to associate itself with the draft resolution introduced by the Permanent Representative of France on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC).

Mauritius, a founding member of the ACTC, welcomes the important progress made to date in the relations between the United Nations and the Agency, as evidenced in the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General, for which my delegation is most grateful.

The relationship between the United Nations and the Agency goes back to 1978, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 33/18. But it was in particular at the beginning of this decade and more specifically after the opening of the liaison offices of the Agency at the United Nations, first in Geneva in 1991 and then here in New York in 1995, that this relationship gained new momentum and greater significance.

It was, quite naturally, to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization that the Agency turned in 1976, six years after its founding, to establish its first contacts with one of the members of the family of the United Nations. That relationship was strengthened by the signing in 1990 of an additional protocol to the 1976 cooperation agreement. In the beginning, the Agency strove to give clear priority to the promotion of education in the broadest sense of the word. Literacy, technical training, vocational training and higher education, and in particular higher technical education, were the main concerns of most of the ministers and Heads of State of member States. Today, education and training remain priorities for the Agency. Cultural activities also figured prominently at the 1970 conference, held in Niamey, that established the Agency.

More recently, the Agency concluded cooperation framework agreements with other United Nations bodies, including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in November 1990, and, particularly following the adoption of resolution 50/3, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). That series was supplemented in June by the signing of

a cooperation agreement by the Secretaries-General of the two organizations with a view to strengthening and expanding their relationship.

Together with UNDP and UNIDO, the Agency is carrying out economic development programmes stressing the promotion of micro- and small enterprises, an area in which the Agency has already acquired a certain amount of expertise, particularly in the least developed countries. My delegation would also like to stress the cooperation between UNIDO and the Agency in organizing activities to promote industrial cooperation in the Indian Ocean countries to process products in the areas of fishing, livestock and agriculture. Joint programmes have been carried out with UNICEF that aim to benefit young girls and young women, particularly in the area of education and literacy training. The Agency has also assisted UNICEF in implementing programmes to promote and protect the rights of women and children.

Cooperation between the two organizations should in future probably focus on promoting the rule of law and good governance an on the area of preventive diplomacy. The Agency and the United Nations have for several years been cooperating in the implementation of joint programmes in the field of human rights. Joint efforts have been made, mainly with the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva and UNDP, to strengthen the rule of law and to lend support to the process of democratization and good governance. Contacts between the Agency and the Centre for Human Rights will be developed further, as a new cooperation agreement was signed last month.

The Agency's cooperation with the United Nations has not been confined to carrying out activities in the field. Thanks to its initiative and its material and logistical support, the countries that use French as a common language have held a series of meetings and discussions in the context of the major international conferences held during the past decade under the auspices of the United Nations. We believe that this dialogue among French-speaking countries has made a significant contribution to the success of those world conferences.

Having read the Secretary-General's report, my delegation is convinced that the adoption of this draft resolution will help not only to strengthen the already exemplary relationship between the United Nations and the Agency but also to expand and deepen these relations to the mutual benefit of both organizations and, ultimately, to that of the well-being of the international community as a whole.

Before concluding, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to pay tribute to the Secretary-General of the Agency, Mr. Jean-Louis Roy, whose term of office will come to an end next December, and to express to him our deep gratitude for his outstanding contribution to bringing about the rapprochement between the United Nations and the Agency.

Mr. Diatta (Niger) (*interpretation from French*): As members know, the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) was founded in 1970 at Niamey, the capital of my country, to foster multilateral cooperation among countries that use French as a common language, particularly in the areas of education, culture, training and economic development.

Looking back over the Agency's activities over the past 27 years, we can reaffirm that the ACTC has made a major contribution to the achievement of one of the purposes of the United Nations: international cooperation in the solution of economic, social, intellectual and humanitarian problems with a view to bringing peoples closer together and to strengthen their solidarity.

The Agency's effectiveness has been manifested, *inter alia*, in the considerable support it has provided to developing countries members to develop their educational systems, protect their cultural heritage, protect their environment and develop their economic potential.

It is gratifying that an institution carrying out activities that are so vital for improving the future of human communities established fruitful cooperation with the United Nations at an early stage. The General Assembly granted it observer status in 1978, which enabled the Agency to become more involved in the activities of the Organization and of its subsidiary bodies. But it was the adoption of resolution 50/3 of 16 October 1995, which noted the complementarity of the activities of the two organizations and laid the foundation for a new partnership.

In furtherance of the provisions of that resolution, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the ACTC signed a cooperation agreement on 25 June 1997, by which the two organizations promised to cooperate in areas of common interest, to provide mutual assistance in certain spheres, and to ensure effective liaison between their two secretariats; my delegation welcomes that agreement.

My delegation considers that the ACTC, through its many activities, does indeed have much to contribute to the efforts of the United Nations Secretariat to serve the international community better. The usefulness of the Agency in very specific areas was clearly reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the item before us today, documents A/52/299 and A/52/299/Add.1 of 27 August 1997 and 16 September 1997 respectively. In reading the report, we were pleased to note that institutions such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization are at present cooperating closely with the ACTC, and that Secretariat structures such as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department for Economic and Social Affairs have expressed the wish to forge links of cooperation in various sectors.

Here, my delegation welcomes the establishment of cooperation in the areas of democratization and the prevention of conflicts. In those areas the Agency has a wealth of experience to share. Niger and many other African countries can bear witness to this, because most of them are engaged in a process of democratization and have benefitted from activities initiated by the Agency in the areas of assistance with and observation of elections, improving the conditions in which justice is carried out, and promoting and protecting human rights.

Turning to the maintenance of peace and the prevention of conflicts, the Agency has shown its value through its efforts to resolve crises in a number of Francophone countries. Its contacts with the Organization of African Unity — which led in March 1990 to the signing of a framework agreement on cooperation — may be seen in the same light, as they involve coordinating the efforts of the two organizations to strengthen the capacity of African countries to prevent conflicts and to maintain peace on the continent.

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his excellent report on this agenda item. The information in the report testifies to the vitality of the relationship between the United Nations and the ACTC. The international community should encourage that relationship because it furthers the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Because of all those considerations, my delegation has joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/52/L.1 of 15 October 1997, which the representative of France has just introduced. We are convinced that the draft resolution will enjoy the unanimous support of Member States.

Mr. Yacoubou (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is happy to join in sponsoring draft resolution A/52/L.1, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC).

It is nearly two years since the official opening in New York, on 25 October 1995, of the Office of the Permanent Observer for the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation to the United Nations; and it has been two years since the General Assembly adopted without a vote, on 16 October 1995, resolution 50/3, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation".

Two years is rather a short time to venture on an assessment of the strengthened cooperation between the two organizations, but I am gratified to note that in 1995 the two-decade relationship between the United Nations and the Agency entered a new phase marked by new agreements between the organizations. Let me give as examples the framework cooperation agreement between the ACTC and the United Nations Children's Fund, signed on 26 October 1995, and the framework cooperation agreement between the ACTC and the United Nations Development Programme, signed on 2 October 1996.

Furthermore, consultations and dialogue have been conducted on a more regular basis between the Secretariats of the two bodies. I should like to mention here the consultations held between senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat and those of the ACTC secretariat. They centred, *inter alia*, on developments in Central Africa and initiatives undertaken by various parties to try to bring about a peaceful settlement to the crisis in the Great Lakes region; electoral assistance to French-speaking countries at their request; and sustainable development, in particular preparatory work for the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to the review and assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21.

These varied areas of discussion and cooperation attest to the vitality of the relationship and, above all, to the real desire of the United Nations to work with the Agency of the French-speaking communities.

It is highly desirable for the two organizations, at the same time as consolidating their work in fields in which cooperation has already begun, to expand the area of their relationship to new sectors. The goal here is to provide a concrete and effective contribution to improving the living and working conditions of the peoples of the Member States.

In a few weeks my country, Benin, which has chaired the group of francophone countries since it hosted the sixth Summit Conference of countries that use French as a common language in December 1995 at Cotonou, will pass the torch to Viet Nam. It is in Hanoi that our Heads of State and Government will be meeting for the seventh summit of our organization. This will be a further opportunity to press ahead with strengthening our special relationship and to initiate new joint action under the aegis of the United Nations and the ACTC.

Thus, the two organizations will be able to lay down new milestones which will provide the foundations and models for the fruitful partnership the international community desires.

Moreover, the election in Hanoi of the first secretary-general of the French-speaking organization will be a new turning point in the relationship between the United Nations and the ACTC, which within their respective mandates will have to confront the challenges of the twenty-first century.

We are therefore confident about the future of the cooperation between our two institutions and the role that they can play, individually and jointly to encourage peoples to work together in a spirit of solidarity and true partnership with the goal of complete eradication of poverty, which now represents the bad conscience of the human community and the commemoration of which today symbolically coincides with this meeting.

Mr. Mpay (Cameroon) (*interpretation from French*): As my delegation is speaking for the first time, allow me to extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Udovenko on his election to preside over the General Assembly. Our congratulations also go to his predecessor, Ambassador Razali Ismail of Malaysia, for the skill with which he guided our work during the previous session.

My delegation also welcomes the election of Mr. Kofi Annan to the post of Secretary-General of our Organization. Cameroon supports his tireless efforts to adapt the United Nations to the changes and upheavals in the world.

The relationship between the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) and the United Nations goes back a number of years. In 1978, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 33/18 in which it granted the Agency the status of observer. Since then, and under the impetus of its Secretary-General, the Agency has carried out its activities in three main directions, including its general mandate of consensus-building.

In its consensus-building activities, the Agency, while seeking to define a francophone identity, has also given expression to a set of shared values. Its basic mandate is to emphasize and develop multilateral cooperation among its members in areas such as education and training, culture and communication, energy, the environment, agriculture, and so on.

Among the other functions entrusted to it in its charter, the Agency undertakes studies, information, coordination and even action programmes. In that respect it is responsible *inter alia*, for helping Governments to gain full access to sources of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and to try to maintain ties with international organizations and non-governmental organizations working in the fields where it is active. Given the numerous development problems faced by the French-speaking countries of the South and the modest means made available by the actors in international cooperation, the Agency has set itself the objectives, among others, of ensuring that francophone countries obtain their due share of the investments of international organizations and of providing them with substantial resources through joint financing.

There has therefore been fruitful cooperation between the Agency and the United Nations in the past two years. In this regard, an example is the signing of a framework agreement with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in addition to the framework agreements concluded with the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). One might also refer to the joint work carried out with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with a view to mutually supporting peacekeeping interventions and the holding of intersectoral meetings with UNESCO in order to devise common approaches in the areas of culture, communication and basic education.

The agreements I have referred to indicate that in the past few years the relationship between the Agency and the organizations of the United Nations system have been strengthened through several synergetic actions. With regard to links between UNESCO and the Agency in the field of culture, to mention but one specific sector, these two organizations are collaborating closely in the implementation of the International Fund for the Promotion of the Study of African Languages and Cultures (FIDELCA) programme. In 1997 UNESCO also took part in organizing the Market for African Art and Entertainment (MASA) which the Agency launched in 1993 in Abidjan.

The implementation of the ACTC/United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) framework agreement has led to the initiation of six joint programmes in 15 French-speaking countries to promote agriculture and industry. These include: support for the establishment of units for the production of agricultural equipment and tools in the countries covered by the Central African Customs and Economic Union; the promotion of industrial cooperation in the Indian Ocean countries for the processing of products of fisheries, animal husbandry and agriculture; and seminars and training sessions on non-polluting industrial project design and the training of trainers in setting up and financing small and medium-sized enterprises.

In cooperation with UNICEF, the Agency has introduced a series of education and literacy programmes for girls and young women in rural areas of Benin, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Viet Nam, Djibouti, Haiti, and other countries.

Several projects are being carried out in implementation of the agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. These include a programme to support small and medium-sized enterprises in Laos within the framework of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, and the establishment in Togo of a network allowing for the collection, processing and dissemination on the Internet of information relating to sustainable development. In partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Agency has held several seminars on various aspects of human rights issues. Furthermore, consultation and dialogue between the secretariats of these two institutions have increased. The most recent of these discussions relate to current issues, including the development of the political situation in Central Africa and the initiatives undertaken to achieve a peaceful settlement of the crisis in that region; electoral assistance to francophone countries; and sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 21.

In this light, we are right to welcome the complementary activities between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation. In principle we could not do otherwise, because these two organizations are working for the well-being of humankind. Therefore, let us hope that their various forms of cooperation will be further strengthened.

That is why my delegation has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/52/L.1, and, like other delegations, we hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): As this is the first time that I have spoken to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, I should like to express my satisfaction at seeing Mr. Hennadiy Udovenko presiding over our work. Given his experience and personal qualities, we are sure that, under his guidance, we will achieve positive results.

The institutionalization of cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, which was enshrined in resolution 50/3 of 16 October 1995 during the fiftieth-anniversary session of the United Nations, thus emerging just as our universal Organization reached maturity, needs to be strengthened today even as the United Nations is making a great effort to adapt to the needs of a world in the midst of change.

Indeed, increased cooperation between the two organizations will, we hope, make it possible to establish the foundations for international cooperation that is free from ideological confrontation and resolutely determined to meet its global challenges: economic and social development; strengthening democracy and respect for human rights; the promotion of sustainable development while taking account of the need for environmental conservation; the struggle against the scourge of drugs; and the promotion of gender equality.

It is fortunate that in all these areas the activities of the United Nations have been backed up by the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, which is pursuing the same goals and defending the same ideal of peace, cooperation and understanding among peoples.

The Agency was created on 20 March 1970 on the basis of a common plan for all countries that use French as a common language, with the aim of giving expression to a new solidarity and an additional factor for bringing people closer together through an ongoing dialogue between civilizations. The Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation has for many years pursued its activities while fully respecting the specific identities of each of its members and participating constructively in global dialogue.

From Rio in 1992 to New York in 1997, via Beijing and other venues, it has participated actively in discussions leading to the adoption of various programmes of action, just as it has supported the participation of its members in these meetings. Heads of State of countries using French as a common language, grouped together in this French-speaking community, decided to establish a new partnership with all the agencies that are members of the United Nations family, thereby stressing the complementarity that exists between the United Nations and francophone movement. In so doing, they gave specific expression to Chapters VIII and IX of the United Nations Charter, which encourage close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations with the object of creating the necessary conditions of stability and well-being so as to ensure stable, friendly relations among nations conducive to maintaining peace and security.

In this respect, the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation plays a very positive role for the francophone community by promoting multilateral cooperation between its members in areas of common interest for the United Nations, such as the right to development and democracy, education and training and technical cooperation in vital areas such as energy, scientific information and the environment. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania, which has always based its policies on dialogue and friendly discussion, can only be delighted to be associated with an initiative that encourages understanding among nations and peoples.

Mauritania is both an Arab and an African country with a diverse cultural heritage, and my country considers its vocation to be active participation within an organization that, while respecting cultural diversity, advocates a fruitful dialogue for the benefit of all its members for the preservation of peace and stability.

That is why we are happy to co-sponsor draft resolution A/52/L.1, which is before the Assembly, and we hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Ravou-Akii (Vanuatu) (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to congratulate the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation", contained in document A/52/299 of 27 August 1997 and its addendum 1 of 16 September 1997, now being considered under agenda item 22 of the General Assembly at its fifty-second session.

The activities of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACTC) can be clearly seen in the field within the territory of the Republic of Vanuatu in three areas: first, in the area of renewable energy sources; secondly, in training art and primary level teachers; and lastly in the training of magistrates.

Let us first consider the area of renewable energy sources. The Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, with the vigorous participation of countries using French as a common language, is at present implementing a vast solar-energy electrification programme for elementary schools in Vanuatu. Some elements of that programme are being carried out in the field in accordance with paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's aforementioned report. These are joint activities between the ACTC and the United Nations Development Programme.

Primary school teachers in the French language receive training at the Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau in Hanoi.

Finally, French-speaking magistrates in the Republic of Vanuatu at present receive training outside the Republic. The Government looks forward to the setting up, in agreement with the Agency, of training structures for such magistrates within the existing legal training system of the South Pacific University, whose headquarters are in Vanuatu.

The Republic of Vanuatu supports cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, and is pleased to be among the sponsors of draft resolution A/52/L.1, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation", introduced by the Permanent Representative of the French Republic. We hope that the Assembly will adopt it unanimously.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978, I now call on Mr. Jean Louis Roy, Secretary-General of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation.

Mr. Roy (Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation) *(interpretation from French):* The objectives of peace, security and development pursued by the United Nations are at the very basis of the francophone project described by the founders of the intergovernmental francophone organization in Niamey in 1970. In its 27 years of existence since then, it has become a real dynamo of progress based on common values, notably those of democracy and the rule of law. It brings together a community of more than 400 million persons in Europe, Africa, America and Asia.

Our community is diverse spiritually, culturally and linguistically. But it has progressively defined the components of its unity, which are the rule of law in conditions of sustainable development. The two are inseparable.

Many times during the biennial conferences held since 1986 the Heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language — one country out of four in the world — have recognized the role of multilateralism in the new international context and confirmed their will to help find a solution to global political and economic problems. They had hoped for this new partnership, based on concrete objectives, with all the members of the United Nations system, this new partnership that brings us together today.

It was in this spirit that at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly the countries of the French-speaking community within the United Nations — several of which have spoken in this debate — took the initiative of seeking to include a new item on the agenda, which resulted in a resolution calling on our two Organizations, the United Nations and the Agency, to explore means of closer cooperation to allow a pooling of their human, technical and financial resources for the benefit of the peace and development of the international community in general and of the French-speaking community, in particular. The resolution noted the achievements of the two Organizations and sought to show the way ahead.

As several speakers have noted, we have for long, as mandated, been drawing closer to the United Nations, particularly during the long, important sequence of international gatherings, which has guided us all, from the World Summit for Children, held in this Hall, to the Rio + 5 Conference, which also took place here a few weeks ago; by way of Rio again; Vienna — the World Conference on Human Rights; Barbados — the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; Tokyo — the International Conference on African Development; Cairo — the International Conference on Population and Development; Copenhagen — the World Summit for Social Development; Rome — the World Food Summit, 1996; and, finally, Rome again — the First Conference of the Parties to the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, which has just taken place. At each of these conferences the Agency and its francophone partners have closely followed the United Nations lead and enriched its efforts. We have sought to ensure that all the French-speaking countries take part in every stage in the preparation, holding and follow-up of these world conferences.

In addition to being involved in these conferences, we have long sought to bring out specific synergies with the United Nations system on the ground. Francophone cooperation is marked by a strong desire for specific, useful and visible action. We are pleased that many countries have mentioned this in referring to a number of our Agency's programmes and their deployment in their countries and regions.

For us, cooperation is like an investment. We need to see a return from our investments somewhere. We have therefore established with the United Nations system, in all cases with specific objectives, synergies on the ground. As many speakers have recalled we worked first with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the area of education, centring our joint activities around basic education, distance learning and new information technology — in brief, it is clear, around the main areas of culture, seeking to align culture and economy, as was the case in 1993, 1995 and 1997, with the three Markets for African Art and Entertainment.

Similar thinking applied in our relations with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), with which a framework agreement was signed in 1990. As several speakers have recalled, it sought to strengthen cooperation between developing countries; to organize solid training in the matter of industrial management, maintenance and research; and to support the creation and management of enterprises,

feasibility studies and the promotion of investment. This is major work, in particular in the area of technology linked to communications and in other areas that the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations covers.

These are the fruits of the cooperation between the two Organizations before 1995, when the resolution that everyone has mentioned, resolution 50/3, was adopted. Since then, in the spirit mentioned earlier, particularly by the Permanent Representative of France, we have pooled considerable resources with those of the United Nations over the last two years. In June this year Mr. Kofi Annan and I signed an agreement on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the ACTC. The agreement took note of many agreements with bodies in the United Nations family, bringing together agreements signed with Mrs. Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund, in October 1995 and October 1996 and with Mr. Speth, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in October 1996. In every case, the agreements were designed to pool the resources of the two Organizations for specific activities in a particular country or region, or in many countries. In Geneva recently I also had the honour to sign an important agreement with the Administrator in Charge of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which provides for joint action to strengthen the rule of law, promote and protect human rights, strengthen democracy and so forth.

On our initiative, on 29 September there was a meeting at our headquarters in Paris of United Nations officials who deal with electoral assistance, peacekeeping and the consolidation of peace and support for the rule of law. The joint activities we have already carried out convince me that that meeting will pave the way to a new and higher level of cooperation in these most fundamental areas.

The draft resolution before the Assembly, while noting with satisfaction the encouraging progress in cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency, includes many important areas of cooperation we can explore in the future. It also illustrates — as needs to be done from time to time — the fruitfulness of multilateralism in world affairs. I hope that the momentum generated by resolution 50/3 can be maintained, consolidated and increased. Our Heads of State and Government have expressed this hope on several occasions, as have many delegations that have made statements and sponsored the draft resolution.

I hope that the francophone delegations and the delegations from other regions that have been good enough to hear what we have had to say about cooperation between francophonie and the United Nations will accept my gratitude for the kind words expressed this morning on the Agency's work and achievements, and for their active support for strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency for the French-Speaking Community. I feel certain that the cooperation between the two Organizations will be reinforced by the work and decisions of the Seventh Summit of the Heads of State and Government of countries that are linked by their common usage of the French language, which will be held in Hanoi from 14 to 16 November.

I reserve my warmest thanks for the men and women in the United Nations system who have given meaning, direction and substance to the bond proclaimed in General Assembly resolution 50/3, which called on the United Nations and the ACTC to pool their resources to consolidate conditions in which we may have peace for development and to meet the universal need to live together, equal but different.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.1.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division) (*interpretation from French*): Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/52/L.1, there will be no programme budget implications.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/52/L.1?

Draft resolution A/52/L.1 was adopted (resolution 52/2).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 22?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 46 (*continued*)

Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/305)

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, to join preceding speakers in expressing thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. The valuable information it contains will serve us well in our deliberations. I would also like to express our support for the statement made by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this item.

Our review of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit gives expression to the will of the international community to deal with social phenomena and the radical changes in the international environment, with their social and economic ramifications affecting all societies.

Heads of State and Government have welcomed the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action and expressed the importance of achieving the goals of sustainable development and the welfare of the individual. They have also reviewed various factors relevant to this question. Nevertheless, a feeling of concern and anxiety continues to cast its shadow on the world environment as a result of the growing social and developmental challenges and the widening economic and social gaps between the developed and the developing countries. This has contributed greatly to widespread poverty, illiteracy and unemployment.

Some statistics have recently indicated that across the world 1.2 billion people live below the poverty line, lacking the most basic necessities such as food, drinking-water, health and education services, and so on.

The United Arab Emirates declares its support for the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, as a new mechanism for increasing international and national awareness of social problems, one which will promote a joint approach to containing the growing challenges.

At the same time, my country reaffirms the pressing importance of the promotion of wide-ranging global and regional cooperation, based on shared perceptions within a broad framework, in order to address social, economic and developmental problems and to ensure the protection of human rights and other basic freedoms.

The linkage between various styles of social development and the growth of regional and local armed conflicts, illegal drug trafficking, and organized crime and violence has increased the difficulty of solving social problems. These challenges have indeed crossed national boundaries to become global issues, and Governments are less able than ever to deal with them alone, without cooperation and mutual coordination, whether on the bilateral, regional or international level. Therefore, we reiterate that the support and continued collective commitment of the international community is an urgent necessity.

There is an equally urgent need for promoting joint efforts to achieve development and to deal with the continued decrease of official development assistance provided by donor countries to the developing world. All of these factors continue to hamper the implementation of various strategies and programmes aimed at effecting developmental and social reforms.

In this context, the United Arab Emirates considers that family-related concerns — the well-being of women, children, the elderly and the disabled — and health and education services are issues of growing importance resulting from continuing challenges in the field of development in many regions, particularly in the developing countries. We therefore call for concerted global efforts to create an international environment characterized by equity and justice, in order to achieve humanity's aspirations for peace, security, stability and development.

At the same time we support the recommendations adopted by the Commission for Social Development, which are aimed at increasing productive employment, reducing unemployment, and improving social services for all sectors of society without exception and on the basis of sustainability and justice.

It is our hope that every effort will be made to ensure the success of the special session of the General Assembly to review and assess the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in the year 2000.

In this regard, we would like to reaffirm anew the importance of strengthening the role of the United

Nations and its specialized agencies and other international development organizations in order to play a more effective part, especially in the social, economic and development fields.

On the instructions of His Highness Sheikh Zayed ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, Head of State of the United Arab Emirates, my country has pursued development policies and measures which are consonant with international and national variables, and which are harmonious with our beliefs, our heritage and our traditions, emanating from the tolerant Islamic shariah.

As part of its commitment to the implementation of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit, the United Arab Emirates has developed new legislation and changed some of its systems for social and economic development, in order to implement ambitious development programmes aimed at the development of human resources, as well as education, health, cultural and training programmes. It has allocated the necessary financial and psychological support resources to provide training programmes for the rehabilitation of the elderly and the disabled, in order to ensure their integration into the society and their effective participation in development programmes.

We also concentrate on development of the participation of the private sector in the training of local human resources and the implementation of national policies and programmes for socio-economic development. My country provides employment opportunities for all its citizens, men and women alike, in order to raise the standard of living of the citizens and to adopt a new scientific approach for managing their daily life.

As an expression of its conviction of the need for linking economic objectives to the goals of comprehensive social development with its human and civilizational dimensions, our country continues to develop rural areas and link them to cities through the modernization of a vast network of roads. This is in addition to the provision of electricity, drinking-water and acceptable housing in all parts of the country. We continue to develop social care programmes in order to achieve a qualitative leap in the standard of living for various sectors of our society and to promote and consolidate the concepts of social and family integration.

We do not confine ourselves to the local level alone; rather, our efforts extend to cooperation with regional, bilateral and international development programmes. My country has participated in the implementation and financing of some social projects in several developing countries. It has given soft loans to other developing countries, to enable them to meet the basic needs of their citizens in the field of social services.

We have participated in cooperative social and developmental endeavours by hosting many conferences, seminars and training programmes on social issues, the environment, population and other development-related matters. We look forward to participating in the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth to be held in Lisbon next August.

Finally, my delegation hopes that the efforts of the international community will rise to meet the challenge, in order to achieve the comprehensive objectives contained in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Work.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): The past decade has been marked by a number of important global conferences, among which the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development was of special importance. Much has happened since then, but we have good reasons for stating that the follow-up to it has not met our expectations.

That is why our delegation is very hopeful that the special session of the United Nations General Assembly in the year 2000, which will undertake an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit, will be the main test in evaluating the capacity of the community of nations to respond properly and adequately to the major social challenges of the present day and to fulfil its Charter commitments.

In preparing for the special session the Governments of Member States should demonstrate their political will in practical terms by intensifying their efforts to eliminate poverty in general, eradicate absolute poverty, increase employment and decrease unemployment and by deepening social integration in their respective countries.

In a letter addressed to the United Nations Secretary-General in March 1996, the President of Ukraine outlined the measures undertaken by our country at the national level to implement the decisions of the Copenhagen Summit. Subsequently, the Presidential decree on the main tendencies of the activities of the State executive power of Ukraine in the implementation of the final documents of the World Summit for Social Development" was promulgated. The recent

establishment within the Government of Ukraine of the post of Vice-Prime Minister for Labour and Social Policy, the creation of a Ministry on Family and Youth and the adoption of a range of programme documents are further evidence of the consistency of Ukraine's social policy and its international commitments.

The Government of Ukraine continues to focus its efforts on the problems of youth and the elderly, as well as on measures for the follow-up to the International Year of the Family, the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and on preparations for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999. In the context of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, the Ukrainian Government has established a system to monitor poverty and to collect and review data and information relating to its root causes and the different forms it takes.

Today, 17 October, we are commemorating the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. According to statistical reports, more than 1.3 billion people are now living on less than $1 a day, and 2 billion more are only marginally better off. This is a disturbing situation which the United Nations should take very seriously. As we may recall, the participants in the World Summit for Social Development committed themselves to the goal of eradicating poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind. In this regard, we support the activity of the newly established Department for Economic and Social Affairs aimed at assisting in the implementation of the follow-up to the Summit. Our delegation would also like to welcome the joint efforts of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and other interested bodies in supporting national anti-poverty strategies.

Today the United Nations is undergoing a complicated process of reform. The time has come for the Organization to change and to be more responsive to the new challenges of the permanently changing world. In our view, notwithstanding certain shortcomings, the proposals of the Secretary-General to reorganize the United Nations structure and programme activities, particularly in the social and economic fields, deserve our full support. We are confident that the United Nations should not only continue to focus on strengthening international cooperation in the field of social and economic development, but that it should be the leader in such activities.

My delegation also notes with satisfaction the revitalization of the activities of the United Nations Commission for Social Development, which has been entrusted with the basic responsibility for exercising control over the implementation of the decisions of the Copenhagen Summit.

The work of the last session of the Commission in the new format has produced quite positive results, among them the adoption of a number of constructive and balanced resolutions on such important issues as productive employment, the International Year of Older Persons, measures for the follow-up to the International Year of the Family and so on. We encourage the United Nations Secretariat to continue with measures to promote further development of the new forms of the Commission's activities.

Finally, I am authorized to state here that Ukraine reaffirms its full commitment to the obligations undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development. Our country stands ready to contribute actively and constructively to the preparation of the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): During the preparatory process for the World Summit for Social Development, the Philippines played host to the Fourth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), which resulted in the Manila Declaration that called for the eradication of poverty by the year 2010.

From 5 to 11 November of this year the Philippines will once again serve as host to the Fifth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Development of ESCAP to review the national progress achieved and regional action taken in the implementation of the Agenda for Action for Social Development in the ESCAP region within the context of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development.

Last year, 18 economic leaders of members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) gathered in the Philippines for the Fourth APEC summit, where they agreed to enhance economic-cooperation initiatives in the Pacific region. The APEC leaders' Declaration of Subic included such social-development issues as human-resource development, women and youth as part of APEC's concerns.

On the subject of youth, the Philippines welcomes Portugal's initiative to host the first World Conference of Ministers for Youth in August 1998 at Lisbon, and we believe that that will be an opportune time to assess the programme of action for youth and to set directions for the future.

Consistent with its international commitments, the Philippines, under the leadership of President Fidel V. Ramos, has intensified implementation of the Social Reform Agenda (SRA), the blueprint of Philippine social development.

The Philippine SRA, which was formulated in 1994, was effectively expanded to improve the lives of ordinary people and ensure that they achieve a quality of life that gives them dignity, hope and the power of choice. It provides concrete, cross-sectoral, time-bound strategies to eradicate poverty, focusing on three major agendas, namely, access to quality basic services, access to productive resources and asset reforms and institution building and participation in governance.

With full employment as our goal, the Philippines has embarked upon a comprehensive employment-strategy programme to provide more jobs and livelihood opportunities, promote the rights and welfare of the labour sector and enhance human-resource development with new approaches to developing a competitive work force prepared to meet the challenges of globalization.

The Philippines has carefully studied the Secretary-General's report, for which we thank him, on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (A/52/305) and the report on the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (A/52/315).

It is evident from the Secretary-General's reports that many countries have made serious efforts in implementing the outcome of the Social Summit. We should encourage the process of informing the international community of the activities pursued by individual countries to implement the outcome of the Summit so that we can share and learn from each others' experiences. In this regard, the Commission for Social Development should develop an appropriate reporting format that would ensure a better appreciation of country activities implementing the specific results of the Summit. It would not be enough to simply summarize pertinent national activities. These activities could be clustered in accordance with the specific recommendations of the Summit.

In a similar vein, we expect organized and coherent data on the specific implementations of the Summit relative to the role of the United Nations and other international organizations and agencies, the non-governmental organizations and the donor community.

The question of resources is of course a central concern in the implementation of the outcome. Unless countries have the required resources, the outcome of the Social Summit will remain a distant blueprint for action. It is of course the principal responsibility of countries themselves to provide the resources for their social development, and the developing countries have done their best, given the various economic and structural constraints confronting them.

The Social Summit emphasized the role of partnership with other development actors, including the donor community, in forging collaborative approaches to promoting social progress and development. It is in this regard that there were some expectations for official development assistance to increase. Instead, the reverse has occurred. The level of official development assistance has continuously declined over the past five years. It must be realized that official development assistance is an essential part of the cost-sharing needed in the global partnership to address priority global social concerns such as poverty eradication, not to mention that such a source of external finance is critical to many capital-starved countries, and also to the least developed countries.

In his report to the 1997 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in document A/52/203, the Secretary-General made reference to innovative ideas for generating funds for globally agreed commitments and priorities. That report had a number of thought-provoking proposals on public-private partnerships in mobilizing finance for achieving development objectives. My delegation believes that the subject should be revisited by the Economic and Social Council, as it did not have sufficient time then to consider the matter.

My delegation also believes that the Commission for Social Development itself must look into the various possibilities of generating or mobilizing resources for activities in response to the Social Summit. Although we agree, for instance, on the focus of the next session of the Commission for Social Development on such topics as promoting social integration, enhancing social protection, violence, crime and the problem of illicit drugs, it may have a better perspective on the financing requirements for specific activities in response to the

Social Summit outcome and where to find such financial resources.

My delegation is glad to note that early preparations are now being planned for the special session in the year 2000 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Social Summit. We support the recommendation that the preparatory committee of the whole of the General Assembly be established during the current session of the Assembly and that an organizational session of that committee be held as early as possible in 1998.

In order to ensure a very successful review and appraisal of the outcome of the Social Summit in the year 2000, it would be essential to commence the substantive preparations as soon as possible. It would also be necessary to arrange various activities beyond those mentioned in document A/52/305 and involving the participation of non-governmental organizations, academic and research organizations, business communities and other members of civil society that will support the process leading to the convening of the special session of the General Assembly in the year 2000.

While we applaud the notable gains achieved thus far since the Copenhagen Summit, we cannot overemphasize the enormity of the task still before us. The international community must prove equal to the challenge. It must be able to demonstrate the required political will and provide the necessary resources for the full implementation of the outcome of the Summit.

Ms. Camerano (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Colombia fully agrees with the decision by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to have the Commission for Social Development carry out the follow-up to the implementation of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit. We congratulate the Economic and Social Council for the seriousness with which it has fulfilled that decision, as can be seen in the multi-year work programme, the opening of its discussions to experts on relevant issues and the emphasis placed on drafting practical measures to achieve the implementation of the Summit's recommendations.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean sponsored the First Regional Conference in Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development in April 1997, in accordance with resolution 51/202. Colombia participated in that Conference and contributed to the drafting of the São Paulo Consensus.

In assessing Colombia's achievements in connection with the basic themes of the Summit, we find that the social policies known as the "social leap" promoted by the Government of President Ernesto Samper coincide with the tenets and endorse the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration in its establishment of policies and programmes to eradicate global poverty.

We have established as a fundamental element of our social policy a "Network for Social Solidarity". This was conceived as an instrument to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable sectors of Colombian society. Social spending between 1994 and 1998 rose to 41.8 per cent of the total, as compared to 36.9 per cent in the previous four-year period. Major budget resources are earmarked for basic education, the health-care system and programmes under the Network for Solidarity, among which stand out those related to recreation and well-being, as well as national strategies for the development of indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples, which involve programmes for the social integration of these ethnic groups that link them to national social and economic development projects.

Colombia endorses the view that we should stimulate national initiatives for social development through credits for persons living in poverty and the provision of low-cost housing.

The eradication of absolute poverty as a goal of the Colombian Development Plan is a prime objective of the policies and actions of the Government. This is why Colombia welcomes the appeals by the General Assembly to unite national efforts and international cooperation in order to resolve this problem.

Colombia believes the international community's financial initiatives and activities to provide assistance for social development — including the programmes of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) — are of great importance, as is the appeal to developed countries to earmark 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance. Similarly, we insist that the international community should be committed to carry out the 20/20 programme for the development of basic social programmes. The freeing up of resources devoted to military purposes is an additional source of financing for development.

Multilateral debt is a serious burden that encumbers the economies of a great number of poor countries, hampering their economic development and leaving them

without sufficient capital for social and human development. The IMF and the World Bank have made an important advance in recognizing that the poorest and most-indebted countries find it difficult to meet their commitments, in particular their multilateral commitments. But in so doing these institutions have recognized, out of 41 extremely indebted countries, only eight countries as having unsustainable debts and 12 as seriously indebted.

Without a doubt, as a part of development financing, external debt will continue to be one of the main problems of global finance, economics and politics. But the way we deal with this problem can improve if we pursue the changes that are already taking place or could take place in the political decisions of the creditor and debtor countries.

To finance social infrastructure in the areas of education and preventive and curative medicine, the developing countries receive financing from only the World Bank, the International Development Association and internal savings. Foreign capital, whether through external credit or foreign investment, is not providing financing for social projects. Regarding social-sector financing for the developing countries, Colombia agrees with the views expressed recently in the Second Committee by a professor at the University of Toronto, Gerald Helleiner. He recommends that World Bank credits for social infrastructure in the areas of education and preventive and curative medicine should finance more than 50 per cent of the costs of projects, and that the World Bank should increase cooperation in the training of experts in the preparation and implementation of social programmes.

In fact, when dealing with extremely poor populations, Colombia has changed its co-financing rates, requesting only 5 per cent investment, the remaining 95 per cent coming from loans from State institutions established for this purpose.

It is important to increase the level of internal control over the fiscal management of projects. This is necessary so that reports on what has been achieved can provide not only a quantification of the financial investment but also real information as to the projects physically carried out, their quality and the population that has benefited from them.

Resources for international technical cooperation have declined. The move to market-based development has been accompanied by attempts to transfer to the private sector the burden of cooperation for international development. As the Non-Aligned Countries did at the Cartagena Summit Conference, Colombia here reaffirms the role of the State in development and in international cooperation for development.

As the Non-Aligned Movement also recognized at Cartagena, the post-cold-war era provides opportunities and challenges for the dialogue on international economic cooperation. To deal with development, focusing both on economic growth and the eradication of poverty, there will have to be greater coordination among developing countries in order to strengthen their capacity to act and to bring an integrated approach to dealing with new problems. We cannot accept attempts to use issues such as environmental protection, intellectual property, the protection of human rights and investments to restrict developing countries' access to markets or to assistance and technology.

The struggle of developing countries to eradicate poverty, achieve economic and social progress and attain conditions of sustained economic growth and sustainable development has as a prerequisite *sine qua non* the establishment of a more propitious and dynamic economic environment.

Colombia fully agrees with two particularly important aspects of the General Assembly resolutions. There must be an integrated approach to the implementation of the results of the Summit within the framework of a coordinated follow-up of the major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields. Also, it is essential that the International Labour Organization be assigned to act in the employment sphere, which is fundamental in dealing with the problem of social development.

Mr. Alhitti (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit for Social Development.

Particularly since the end of the cold war, all the States of the world, and especially the developing and least-developed countries, have given growing importance to the question of social and economic development. This trend is certainly right and appropriate, and given the direct relationship between development and international security and stability, it requires increased moral and material support and participation of all parties. The question of development is not just a question for the third world, but for all the countries of the world, because the advantages of stability and international

security, which are strengthened by development and its advantages, benefit all countries of the world without exception, guaranteeing an environment of peace and security. This, in turn, has a positive impact on development. And thus the cycle of poverty, hunger and underdevelopment can be broken and replaced by a cycle that will harmoniously lead all of humanity toward greater development, progress and prosperity.

It might be useful here to stress one truism of which we are all aware: development cannot be achieved without the effective deployment of all material means and human resources. As regards material means, international commercial relations have currently reached an important turning point, as a result of the economic-growth imbalance between North and South that we have experienced in recent decades. A large portion of the population of the South is now overwhelmed by debt, poverty and underdevelopment. Further, there is a great disparity in technological development and progress between North and South, and this has produced serious problems that are hamstringing the development of the countries of the South. The counterpart is that the developed countries are accumulating wealth and exploiting the raw materials and resources of the developing countries. All these factors, separately and together, are contributing to a greater deterioration of social development in many countries of the world.

In the area of the development of human resources, the situation is as grave as that involving material means, because illiteracy, poverty, hunger and disease, as well as discrimination, are continuing to spread in many countries. This has a very negative impact on development.

With regard to the implementation by Iraq of the recommendations of the Copenhagen Summit, I regret to inform the Assembly that my country has not been able to implement any because of the economic sanctions that have been imposed upon it. Also, there is a need to re-examine many of the negative practices that are without doubt hampering development, if not stopping it completely.

We wish to draw attention to the regrettable fact that the negative role played by certain United Nations agencies has hampered or even blocked the development of certain developing countries through the imposition of economic sanctions against their peoples, which has had an overall negative effect on the development process and on the inhabitants of those countries.

We are not making these problems up. The Secretary-General dealt in a detailed manner with the question of sanctions in his report, "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace":

> "They can conflict with the development objectives of the Organization and do long-term damage to the productive capacity of the target country. They can have a severe effect on other countries that are neighbours or major economic partners of the target country." *(A/50/60, para. 70)*

I would mention also the most recent report of the General Assembly Subgroup on the Question of United Nations-imposed Sanctions, which recommended rigour and caution in the imposition of sanctions against States. That Subgroup advised that sanctions be resorted to only when all peaceful means of settling disputes have been exhausted; that did not happen in the case of Iraq. It highlighted the need to define conditions for the imposition, lifting and duration of sanctions and to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and the development of the target country. That did not happen either in the case of Iraq; a sort of *carte blanche* blockade of indeterminate duration has been imposed against my country. Mrs. Graça Machel, the expert of the Secretary-General, reached the same conclusion in her report on the impact of armed conflict on children (A/51/306), which was submitted to the General Assembly last year.

The unrestricted use of economic sanctions in recent years has made it clear that the Charter of the United Nations has serious shortcomings in the area of sanctions with respect to their application and scope; their impact on development and human rights in the target country, including the right to food, medicine, education and employment; and mechanisms for easing or lifting them. That shortcoming has allowed certain countries within the Security Council to transform sanctions — measures that should be resorted to only in exceptional cases in order to resolve international conflicts — into a tool of revenge used to starve peoples, to impede their development programmes, and in some cases even to set back their development.

A brief review of the nature of these sanctions shows to what extent they have been applied so as to deprive the Iraqi people of their most basic human rights along with their right to development. For instance, the sanctions Committee has refused to grant to Iraq the right to buy tires, children's pencils, ambulances or water-

purification products because one Committee member claims that these basic necessities strengthen Iraq's infrastructure and also that they could be used for other purposes. It is as if he were saying that his country does not want Iraq to possess a solid economic infrastructure and that his Government wishes to destroy our country's economy.

We wish to state briefly our belief that sanctions and the manner in which they are applied call into question the credibility of the Organization, its code of ethics and the spirit of its Charter and of its provisions. Sanctions are an inhumane and ineffective tool because the countries — members of the Security Council — that have resorted to their imposition have done so by using the United Nations to achieve their own political goals, which are incompatible with the objectives of the Organization in promoting international peace, stability and security and fruitful cooperation among States.

A quick look at United Nations resolutions and at the reports of international and non-governmental bodies makes clear the very serious impact that the blockade has had on development and in particular on the population. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the negative impact of the sanctions has by far overshadowed any possible gain. Numbers and statistics bear this out, indicating that five times as many people died as a direct result of the economic blockade as did in the bombing of Hiroshima. The blockade, therefore, is a weapon of mass destruction. And that is not to mention the country's stalled development, the deterioration of the educational system, illiteracy, widespread poverty and famine.

This process of destruction is a premeditated form of genocide against the people of Iraq and therefore a practice that runs counter to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. For instance, recent statistics show that last June, more than 4,434 children under the age of 5 died, as against 593 in 1989; and more than 6,460 children over the age of 5 died, as against 1,685 in 1989.

One day we will have to ask ourselves how the various United Nations agencies have dealt with the economic and social development of a country victimized by outdated resolutions that have no moral or legal basis.

Mr. Somavía (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour and a pleasure for me to comment, on behalf of Chile, on agenda item 46, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development". I should like at the outset to state that we support the important statements on this item made by Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and by Paraguay on behalf of the Rio Group.

I should like at this point to take stock of what has been achieved since the holding of the World Summit for Social Development and also to look to the future, to Copenhagen + 5, to the special session of the General Assembly to be held in the year 2000, in order to assess the commitments entered into in the Declaration and Programme of Action and to develop them further.

Why must we look to the near future at this stage? First of all, because only by having clear in mind our long-term, fundamental objectives can we ensure that the manner in which the Summit is being implemented is in keeping with what was actually agreed in Copenhagen. Secondly, because Rio + 5 — although outstanding in terms of the high level of participation and the confirmation of the United Nations as the international forum for dealing with the question of the environment — was not as successful as many of us had hoped. That was because we basically repeated the exercise that took place five years ago in Rio — reopening negotiations on the text of a document that had already been agreed to, or simply repeating language that had been used in the past.

This must not happen with Copenhagen + 5. We cannot confine ourselves, at the special session of the General Assembly — which will coincide with the beginning of the twenty-first century — to negotiating once again commitments that have already been entered into. Rather, we should take this opportunity to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Summit in a completely innovative fashion.

I believe that it is possible to plan a special session that would be different from the routine, one that would focus on adopting a considerable number of major initiatives to implement the outcome of the Summit — action-oriented initiatives, and initiatives of implementation — and on negotiations not on texts but on specific action at the national, regional and international levels. Let me share some of my ideas about what a session on specific initiatives should look like.

First of all, such a session should ideally have the ability to bring together all the real actors: Governments, parliaments, political parties, labour, business, banks,

financial institutions, civil-society organizations, religious leaders, mayors, local leaders and the media. We must make use of their imagination and their sense of collective responsibility. If we genuinely want to implement the Copenhagen documents, each of them will have a major role to play — not only Governments, which must set the framework, but also individual actors with the means and the tools at the level of their own activities to achieve the Summit objectives.

We must recall that the Social Summit was an intergovernmental meeting with many parallel activities; this was a traditional way of organizing such a conference. But I would like to see an Assembly session that would bring together all these other actors, so that they too could promote and adopt initiatives within the scope of their respective activities. In other words, the United Nations should provide a space in which society as a whole can share in the work of implementing the outcome of the Social Summit, with its own projects. We must be ambitious, as we were with the World Summit itself; we can thus achieve goals we thought difficult to attain.

At that session I would want to see the world's greatest concentration of social actors, working together on the central issue: people. Only the United Nations can do this. The Copenhagen Summit was the greatest meeting of Heads of State in history; why can we not do the same for social actors?

Let me speak of some initiatives that the year-2000 special session could promote. First, we could formulate a legally binding convention aimed at the eradication of poverty. We discussed this during the Summit's preparatory process, but many felt that it was premature and that we first needed the political commitment to eradicate poverty. That was achieved with the Copenhagen Declaration. This worldwide commitment already provides a rallying point; now we must move forward and make it legally binding within a realistic time-frame.

Second, we could work to ensure the integrated development of grass-roots communities. Would it really be utterly impossible for us to focus on the 20 per cent of the world's communities that are the neediest, and to take targeted action based on the needs they themselves define, thus to eliminate absolute poverty, to create local jobs, to stimulate microcredit, to eliminate violence, to set up health centres, and to fill other basic needs at the community level? In short, we must address the diverse basic problems affecting people living on the edge. These are issues that need to be dealt with both at the local and municipal levels and at the national level. Here, a commitment by local authorities is fundamentally important.

Third, a critical issue underscored at Rio+5 was the degree of subsidy required by non-sustainable development. We must study current financial systems, which are full of inconsistencies and anomalies, and provide incentives for sustainable development. We must understand the true impact of today's financial system; otherwise, we will be unable to use it to provide incentives for overall development. We need "friendly" financial systems to create jobs and to care for the environment.

Fourth, we must develop new ways of using private capital to meet social needs — not as charity, but as good business. It is important to recall that the business sector participated actively in the World Summit process. We must recognize that the notion that private capital can provide goods and services to meet social needs has been alien to those who are used to thinking in terms of public spending for such purposes. The private sector too has traditionally felt that investments in this sphere lie within the purview of the public sector. I think that there is a great opportunity here — and not in terms of incentives for private businesses to devote a small portion of their profits to social ends. It is proper that this should be done on a voluntary basis. I am thinking rather of encouraging commercial investment that would yield profits, but that would also provide goods and services that could help address social problems. There must be further deliberations on this subject, and all parties must be ready to study it in a creative way. Chile has had successful experiences in the sphere of preventive social action.

Fifth, there is an obvious need to set up some kind of worldwide cooperation for the creation of more and better jobs. Job-creation must be at the heart of economic policy. The financial resources are there, but will and determination are lacking. Jobs must be at the centre of the economy if we want people to be at the centre of development. We must harmonize our macro-economic and our micro-social policies. We must be clear that nations cannot achieve economic stability while destabilizing the lives of their peoples.

Happily, we have progressed beyond the kinds of structural-adjustment policies followed in the 1980s, thanks in good measure to abundant criticism from many quarters, including from United Nations agencies and at

the World Summit itself. But we still need a world consensus that only the creation of more and better jobs will enable us to reach the Summit goals. Jobs have a crucial role to play in reducing poverty and in promoting social integration: those are two other major issues of the Summit.

Sixth, it is critical to halt the decline in international cooperation. We know of course that the richest countries are facing internal problems, both in their economies and with respect to public opinion, and that perhaps their assistance cannot be so generous or unconditional as it was in the past. It is true also that there have been mistakes, and that assistance has not always been properly used. But to my mind, that is not the point. The real point is that, given the structure of modern-day economic relations, we cannot hope that countries will achieve development solely on the basis of private investment.

In many cases, of course, this could be the path to follow, but certainly not in every case. To reduce international cooperation at a time when protectionism is on the rise, and to expect that this will ensure world stability, is absolutely impossible. Therefore, we urgently need to convince public opinion, Parliaments and the media in the countries of the North of the reality that international cooperation is a strategic element of world stability and not a question of willingness or unwillingness to provide funding or of need at the national level. This is a key component because it should be earmarked for specific needs that cannot otherwise be met.

As established in the Copenhagen Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development, there are real social problems in each country, but, it is not with policies of isolation that the countries of the North will find the stability they seek. Cooperation, however, is primarily a political issue. It is not merely a matter of adopting resolutions, but also of bringing together those actors that are prepared to take practical steps to achieve it.

Seventh, we urgently need to develop initiatives of solidarity among the countries of the third world. The Summit process was very decisive in this respect. I put a great deal of emphasis on recognizing the special situation of Africa and the need for us to adopt a specific commitment to Africa and to the less advanced countries. It was not easy to achieve agreement on this, because other developing countries in other geographical areas were concerned about the implications of differentiating or dividing the countries of the third world in this way. It seems to me, on the contrary, that we, among ourselves, should apply to the third world the same principles and values that we expect the developed world to apply to it. If we are not prepared to recognize the special difficulties of some of our developing countries and to support them accordingly, then we cannot really expect a similar stance from the developed countries vis-à-vis the developing world in general. I would suggest that the 30 most developed nations of the third world, however we define them, begin to develop initiatives of solidarity with other developing countries to implement the outcome of the World Summit on Social Development. Nothing would do more to reinforce the vision of change at the international level, and nothing would be more emblematic of the new way in which these issues could be dealt with than the third world's setting the example.

Finally, on the basis of the experience of the Summit and that of other world conferences, we can assess the impact on them by organizations of civil society, non-governmental organizations and others. This was especially true with regard to Copenhagen. However, the problem for organizations of civil society as a whole is that they are organized into sectors: organizations of women concerned primarily with women's issues, ecologists concerned with the environment, human rights organizations concerned with human rights, and so on. There are some cross-sectoral ties between these organizations, but, in spite of all their efforts, they tend to have partial information and rarely work together.

On the other hand, there are social actors that play what could be called a structural role in today's economy, but for the most part are not organized. We could speak of putting private enterprise at the service of social development, the great advantage of which is that both sides benefit. However, in the final analysis, a business is able to have earnings because there are consumers for its products. Investment is the key, as is accumulation. The ability of private investment to generate wealth is essential, as there can be no distribution without the creation of wealth. However, that process depends in turn on individuals to consume what is available in the market.

As a result, organizing all of us as consumers — like the union workers who organized themselves in the past to defend their interests — seems to be a central element. But here I am focusing primarily on the fact that all sectors of civil society continue working without coordination between them, and it would be a major objective to have some kind of forum of the sort we are thinking about in the General Assembly, to initiate a

large, global framework for civil society, to interconnect all these various sectors and to establish a high-level agenda on common issues on which to act together. The Social Summit issues — the eradication of poverty, full employment and social integration — are clearly part of that common agenda.

Finally, in terms of specific initiatives that could be carried out using the Summit as a launching pad, academic centres supported by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development could focus their research on the major obstacles to the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

In conclusion, those who constantly criticize may well say that these ideas are all well and good, but that in substance nothing will change and that things will remain as they are because the international community is not prepared to work with imagination for the future. That is what they are going to say. But I would like to recall that exactly the same things were said when, five years ago, the work began on organizing the World Summit for Social Development. The argument was that social development was not a world issue, that it would be very difficult to get the developed countries to make a commitment to this process, that this would be just one more conference that would end with the classic appeals from the South for a distribution of resources from the North — a litany of reasons as to why the Social Summit, first of all, would not take place and, secondly, if it did take place, it would be a failure. The truth is that there was a political framework for the Social Summit, and the results of the special session of the General Assembly under preparation also are going to depend on the commitment of all and on a clear identification of the political framework.

Let me conclude by saying that whenever I am faced with cynicism, I recall Oscar Wilde, who said that cynics know the price of everything but the value of nothing. Some might feel that I sometimes go to the opposite extreme and that I am too insistent. I am prepared to accept this, but the truth is that I believe deeply that our personal attitudes and our attitudes as States are very important. We can always emphasize difficulties and problems, but, contrariwise, we can always also focus on our own strength to confront those difficulties and seek to maximize our joint capacity to do it.

It was said that slavery would never disappear, that unions would never be established, that women would never vote, that the idea of human rights and the democratic process would never be reaffirmed in the world, that decolonization was impossible, that the Berlin Wall would stand for ever, that apartheid would never end. But these things did take place, and they took place because people did not allow themselves to become discouraged when faced with difficulties; on the contrary, they decided to act in unity and to maintain the integrity, the conviction and the values that make things happen.

This is the point we have reached with the World Summit for Social Development. The process led to a successful start, but we still have battles to fight. It is worth our while to participate in those battles and to plan well for them. There is no vision without organization. If vision is accompanied by organization and by the capacity to reach consensus, through a will to listen and to learn from others, then we can make progress. Fundamental differences, and respect for cultural diversity and various spiritual traditions, are key in social questions. Consequently, we must make progress in this sphere through a willingness and a commitment to listen to others.

If we have the power to change the world, then we must look within ourselves — at our conviction, desires and capacity to listen to and to work with others and to arrive at consensus. We must never believe that what appears impossible today cannot be achieved tomorrow. Everything that once was impossible is finally brought about by the persistence of human will.

The Acting President: In accordance with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 32nd plenary meeting, held on 16 October 1997, I now call upon the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): We now stand midway between the World Summit for Social Development and the special session of the General Assembly to be held in the year 2000 for the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of that Summit.

At the Copenhagen Summit the family of nations came together at the level of Heads of State or Government to make solemn commitments concerning a new vision of development, which would have at its centre the human person. It was a moment of hope and expectation for many, including the wide range of representatives of civil society who worked constructively with the Governments to look at the challenges of poverty, of creating productive employment and of broad social integration.

We must not disappoint this hope and expectation. If we come to the review process with positive results, we will give a real boost to the confidence of our people in the United Nations system. If we come to the review process having made little progress, or even registering reduced consensus around our commitments, we will lend a new weapon to those who wish to sow scepticism about the ability of the United Nations to address the real issues of people.

Today, my delegation would like to address three specific themes which must be examined in the short period of time before the review session. The first theme is poverty. For many, the Social Summit was seen as the "poverty Summit", because at Copenhagen it was clearly recognized that it is possible to rapidly reduce and ultimately to eliminate, within a determinate period, the humiliating scourge of extreme poverty. The means to eliminate extreme poverty exist. Countries agreed to put in place clear strategies by the end of 1996. How can we celebrate the jubilee year 2000, how can we pass with honour into the new millennium, if we fail to report to the review session clear and sustained progress in the fight against extreme poverty?

I note in passing that today we are observing the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. I should like to quote the appeal made by Pope John Paul II for this occasion:

> "I renew my appeal that each person may commit himself, according to his own responsibilities, to eliminating the causes of poverty. May no one remain indifferent to those wounded by life! The Church, with great respect and affection, is alongside all those whom poverty deprives of their dignity, of their family life, of the opportunity to receive an education and to have a job. They are our brothers and sisters, whom Christ loves with particular preference. They await our concrete solidarity."

A second, more complex, theme which my delegation would like to address is the significance today of social and economic rights. The indivisibility of human rights, as well as their universal character, has been reaffirmed repeatedly by the international community over the past years. It is a principle which must be reaffirmed also in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But today there are also disquieting tendencies which reduce the significance of social and economic rights, considering them mere "aspirations", and taking away from them their specific character as "rights".

The full realization of these rights, it is clear, will only be accomplished gradually. But we must not allow the concept of "gradualism" to mean "indefinite postponement". In the complexity of modern societies and economies, Governments on their own will not be the sole actors in the realization of these rights. Their realization will require, among other aspects, the putting into place of policies which enable the market, the private sector and civil society, as well as public authorities on the local, regional and national level, to work constructively together. The complexity of the realization of these rights in society must not, however, reduce their significance as rights for each individual. When we speak of rights to nutrition, education, health, shelter, work, or development, we are really speaking of the specific moral goods of each individual, of the essential dimensions of his or her being a human person.

Being deprived of these rights, suffering the humiliating effects of such deprivation, can further lead to a situation in which the possibility of the person exercising other fundamental rights is, *de facto*, greatly curtailed. Where people are deprived of the possibility to fully enjoy the exercise of their social and economic rights, they so often enter into broader exclusion from full participation in society.

The third aspect which my delegation would like to address is that of the financial means available for development assistance, and especially the crisis of official development assistance. The significant growth of direct investment flows to the poorer countries has been one of the most indicative factors for development policy in recent years. The future of development will be very much linked with the ability of poor countries to attract such investment and to see that it brings social development for their own people.

But there is a great imbalance in these flows, which go principally to a handful of countries viewed as attractive. The poorest countries, if they are to attract investment, still require substantial official development assistance to remedy their comparative disadvantage. They will need well-targeted assistance to improve their basic infrastructures — not just physical infrastructures, but also human ones, through improved education and health care, and social ones, through investment in the structures of legality and governance.

Why are the funds currently available for official development assistance at an all-time low? It is true that in the past such funds have been badly utilized and have

not produced results. But spending, corruption and mismanagement marked the policies of donor and recipient countries. Indeed, it is more and more obvious today how much the self-interested policies of donor countries during the cold war and post-colonial periods have had long-term distorting effects on the development prospects of many countries, indeed of entire regions.

But, it must be admitted, the reduction of official development assistance is more than a question of the recognition of past errors or of donor fatigue. It is a question, in some cases, of a weakening of solidarity and a growth of dangerous isolationism. My delegation strongly rejects such tendencies. The question of international solidarity is not a mere policy issue: it is a question of the very nature of humanity, of the human community to which we all belong. If the process of globalization which is taking place in our world is to be truly human, it requires the construction of a truly global community, based on the common good of all humanity, in which there is a sense of common responsibility for all, especially for the weakest.

The Holy See would hope that one of the principal results of the process of the implementation of the Copenhagen World Summit and the preparation of the review conference in the year 2000 would be a renewed international consensus on the essential role of development assistance. It is certainly a question of identifying where and how such assistance can be best utilized. But it is above all a question of the recognition that investment in international solidarity — a sure contribution to a more equitable, and thus a more stable world — is something which is for the good of all.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to inform members of some changes in and additions to the programme of work of the General Assembly contained in document A/INF/52/3.

On Wednesday morning, 22 October, the General Assembly will, as the first item, hear an address by the President of the Republic of Mozambique. As the second item, the Assembly will take up agenda item 7, entitled "Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations". The third item to be considered is sub-item (b) of agenda item 16, on the "Election of seven members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination". The Assembly will then continue with the consideration of the items listed in the Programme of Work for Wednesday morning, with the exception of agenda item 34, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization", which will now be taken up on Thursday, 20 November, in the morning, and agenda item 40, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe", which will be taken up on Tuesday, 25 November, in the morning.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.